

The Truth and Experience of God's Salvation

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Acts 4:12

I. God's Creation and Man's Fall [one lesson]

- A. Man was made in the image of God, a vessel to contain God - Gen. 1:26; 2:7; Zech. 12:1; Rom. 9:23-24
- B. Man was put in front of the tree of life to receive God as life - Gen. 2:8-9
- C. Man believed Satan's lie, disobeyed God's word, and became fallen - Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-8

II. The Result of Man's Fall [eight lessons]

- A. The problem of sin - Rom. 3:23 (*Gospel Outlines*, Subjects 11, 12, 16)
 - 1. Constituted sinners due to Adam's disobedience - Gen. 3:11; Rom. 5:19
 - 2. Having a sinful nature, Satan's poison is in us - John 8:44; Rom. 7:15, 17, 19-20
 - 3. Becoming sinners in practice, under God's condemnation, going to the lake of fire eternally - Rev. 20:10; 21:8
 - 4. Separated from God and hiding from God due to sins - Gen. 3:8; Isa. 59:2
- B. The problem of death - Romans 6:23a (*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 14)
 - 1. Cut off from tree of life - Gen. 3:22-24; Rom. 5:12; James 1:15
 - 2. The spirit being deadened so man cannot contact God - Gen. 2:17; Eph. 2:1, 5a
 - 3. The result of Satan's plot to keep man from God's life - Eph. 4:18
 - 4. Eternal separation from God, the second death; to miss the New Jerusalem, the tree of life, and the water of life - Rev. 20:15

III. God's Salvation [twelve lessons]

- A. The source of salvation is God's love - Eph. 2:4-5; Titus 3:4-7
 - 1. God's love was manifested in sending His Son into the world to be our Savior - John 3:16; 1 John 4:9
 - 2. God's love caused His Son to die for our sins - Rom. 5:8; 1 John 4:10
 - 3. God's love makes it possible for us to be His children - 1 John 3:1; 1 Peter 1:3
 - 4. God's love is eternal and nothing can separate us from this love - Jer. 31:3; Rom. 8:35-39
- B. The provision of Christ's redeeming death on the cross
 - 1. Cleansing and forgiveness of sins is by the blood of Jesus, God's Son - Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:22b; Rev. 1:5b; Matt. 26:28; 1 John 1:9
 - 2. Redemption by the blood is to be purchased, bought, so that we are not our own any longer, we belong to God - 1 Cor. 6:19b-20a; 1 Pet. 1:18-19
 - 3. Justified by His blood is to be accepted by God according to His standard of righteousness - Rom. 3:24; 5:9
 - 4. Reconciled by His death is to be brought back to God and to be secured in His salvation - Rom. 5:10a
- C. The provision of Christ's life giving resurrection
 - 1. Conquers death, the Devil (the one who has the might of death), and Hades (the place of death) - Acts 2:24; 1 Cor. 15:54b; Heb. 2:14
 - 2. Releases the divine life and causes the believers to be regenerated by God - John 12:24; 1 Peter 1:3
 - 3. Christ becomes the life-giving Spirit in order to enter into us as life - 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 20:22
 - 4. Opens the way for Christ to live in us to be our life - Eph. 3:17a; Col. 1:27; 3:4a

IV. How to be Saved [eight lessons]

A. From sin

[These points relate to points 1. to 4. in III. B. above]

1. By confessing our sins - 1 John 1:9
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subjects 196 and 197; Hymn 1008)
2. By believing in Jesus, the Savior who died for us sinners - Rom. 5:6-9; John 3:18
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 109; Hymn 1048)
3. By receiving Christ as our righteousness, God's gift - Isa. 61:10; Jer. 23:5-6; Phil. 3:9; 1 Cor. 1:30
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 140; Hymn 295)
4. By repenting and returning to God - Luke 15:11-24
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 91; Hymn 1052)

B. From death

[These points relate to points 1. to 4. in III. C. above]

1. By believing in the resurrection of Christ - Rom. 10:9-10
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 157; Hymn 123)
2. By being born again - John 3
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 100; Hymn 1019)
3. By calling on the Lord's Name - Rom. 10:13; Matt. 1:21b;
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 158; Hymn 1083)
4. By receiving Christ as life - John 1:12
(*Gospel Outlines*, Subject 97; Hymn 1017)

V. The Need to be Baptized [four lessons]

A. To be saved from this crooked generation [one lesson] - Mark 16:16; Acts 2:40-41 (*The Mystery of Human Life*, p. 16)

1. Baptism is a testimony before men that we have been saved
2. All believers must be baptized in order to be saved not only before God, but also before men

B. To be delivered out of Satan's kingdom and transferred into the kingdom of God [two lessons] - John 3:5; Col. 1:13

1. The world is Satan's kingdom - 1 John 5:19b
2. The world and its ruler (Satan) have been judged by the cross of Christ - John 12:31
(see footnotes on this verse)

[These two points may be illustrated by Israel's slavery in Egypt (Exo. 1:11-14; 3:7, 9), and by Pharaoh and his armies being drowned in the Red Sea (Exo. 14:26-28)]

3. The world crucified the Lord Jesus - 1 Cor. 2:8
4. The world is an enemy to God
 - a. to love the world and the things in the world is to not love the Father - 1 John 2:15-16 (see footnotes)
 - b. whoever determines to be a friend of the world is constituted an enemy of God - James 4:4
5. The world is passing away - 1 John 2:17

C. To terminate our old life and walk and begin a new life and walk [one lesson] - Rom. 6:3-4, 6; Gal 3:27

VI. How to Contact the Lord [*Two weeks for each topic, cover the meaning and teach them how to practice using the verse given until they have really contacted the Lord in their spirit*]

- A. By calling on the name of the Lord (*Life-Study of Genesis*, Message 25; and the booklet *Calling on the Name of the Lord*)
 - 1. The Lord is near to all who call upon Him - Psalm 145:18
 - 2. The Lord is rich to all who call upon Him - Rom. 10:12
- B. By pray-reading the Word (the booklet *A Time with the Lord*)
 - 1. Eating the Lord's word makes it the joy and rejoicing of our heart - Jer. 15:16
 - 2. The Lord's words are spirit and life to us - John 6:63
- C. By prayer (Lesson 4, "Prayer," *Life Lessons*, Witness Lee)
 - 1. Prayer brings us into the enjoyment of the Lord's living presence - Psalm 16:11
 - 2. The Lord answers our prayers - 1 John 5:14, 15
- D. By reading the Bible (Lessons 5 and 6, "Reading the Bible," *Life Lessons*, Witness Lee) [*set up a Bible reading schedule for the young people*]
 - 1. The Father's word is truth - John 17:17
 - 2. We live by the word of God - Matt. 4:4

It is crucial to cover sections I. to VI. slowly and thoroughly to bring the young people into a genuine experience of salvation, baptism, and contacting the Lord in their spirit. The following lesson on the Lord's Table should be given prior to the newly baptized ones joining the Lord's Table meeting of the church.

VII. How to Go On

- A. With assurance of salvation - Heb. 13:5b
(Lesson 1, "Knowing That You Are Saved," *Life Lessons*, Witness Lee)
 - 1. What God IS - John 10:28-29
 - 2. What God SAYS - 1 John 5:13, 19b
- B. In the security of our salvation, safeguarded by
(*New Life Lessons*, p. 6)
 - 1. The love of God - John 13:1
 - 2. The power of God - John 10:28
 - 3. The redemption of Christ - Heb. 7:25
- C. At the Lord's Table
(*"The Bread Breaking Meeting"* (1) and (2), *Life Lessons*, Witness Lee)
 - 1. The meaning of the bread
 - a. the Lord's physical body broken on the cross
 - b. the Lord's mystical body, the church
 - 2. The meaning of the cup
 - a. the Lord's blood for the forgiveness of our sins
 - b. the Lord's blood for securing all the blessings of the new covenant
 - 3. By eating and drinking we remember the Lord
- D. In the fellowship of the church
(*"Knowing the Church," Life Lessons*, Witness Lee)
 - 1. The Assembly of called-out ones (practice) - Matt. 16:18
 - 2. The Family of God (relationship) - Eph. 2:19; Gal 6:10
 - 3. The Body of Christ (nature) - Eph. 1:22-23
 - 4. The Bride of Christ (love and satisfaction) - Eph. 5:25
 - 5. The Warrior to defeat God's enemy (warfare) - Eph. 6:11-12
 - 6. The House of God (mutual dwelling) - 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:21-22

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Introduction

This series of lessons is intended to be used as a reaping of the previous years of teaching the children God's Word. They are designed to truly make them "wise unto salvation" (2 Tim. 3:15), in the event they have not yet realized their personal need of God's Savior and salvation. The children's salvation should not be taken for granted, neither by them, nor by us. We should try to help them to be certain of their salvation.

The lessons spend adequate length to touch the seriousness of man's fall, of sin and death. As the lessons are given it is hoped that the children will not only be enlightened in their understanding, but will be brought into the conviction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8-9) to be touched in their heart and conscience. Their response should be carefully noted while the lesson is being given. If it is noted that they seem to be unsure of their salvation or under conviction they should be helped immediately after the lesson to receive the Lord Jesus as their Savior.

These lessons have been developed from brother Eugene Gruhler's outlines for children's lessons.

Sterling Byassee
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Santa Ana, California

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF SALVATION - SIXTH GRADE

OVERVIEW

In the sixth grade we preach the gospel to the children. In a very detailed way, we give them two main points, two problems: sin and death. The Lord's death on the cross and His resurrection has taken care of both of these problems.

FOUR MONTHS GETTING THEM READY TO BE SAVED

We have four lessons on sin to convince them that they are sinners. This is a must. Then we have another month to convince them that they are dead in their trespasses and sins. After two months they are convinced that they are dead in their sins. Then we spend one month on how the Lord's death solves the problem of sin. Then we spend another month on how the Lord's resurrection releases life. That is four months spent getting them ready to be saved.

TWO MONTHS - EIGHT WAYS TO BE SAVED

Then we spend two months giving them eight ways to get saved. Four ways are related to sin and four ways are related to death. This is the goal we are after.

TWO SERVING TOGETHER THAT EACH CHILD COULD BE DEFINITELY AND PERSONALLY SAVED

During this time two always serve together. It does not matter if there are only two kids, two workers are always there. One is giving the lesson and the other is watching the faces. You can tell what point touches what kid. They have a long period of time in the mornings so when the lesson is over and they turn to other things, the worker that was watching the faces, takes the ones that were touched into another room and leads them to be definitely and personally saved if they are ready. But usually when they are touched their eyes tear or something. You can tell when they are ready. Then we deal with them one by one and help them to be definitely saved. It is according to the point that they were touched on. There is a different point each week such as; you have to believe, receive, repent, and confess.

Each week a different point is covered, four ways related to sin and four ways related to death. During those eight weeks we are reaping the harvest of the last eight years. Everything that we have been doing is just for those eight weeks. They do it with a lot of prayer, desperation, and exercise. They can all be saved.

The preceding are the blending of briefly edited transcriptions of Gene Gruhler's sharings given in several localities.

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THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson One

MAN'S CREATION

Burden to Impart:

The climax of God's creation of the universe and all of the creatures on the earth was the creation of man. Man was created last, for all things were for man and man was obviously for God, for man bore God's image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). Man alone was created with a spirit (Gen. 2:7; Zech. 12:1). Thus, man could express God outwardly (because he had God's image and likeness) and could even contain God inwardly (because he had a spirit).

Memory Verse: Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over...all the earth..." (Genesis 1:26).

Facts to Teach:

1. The last item that God created in Genesis chapter one was man. After this God rested. The fact that man was the last thing that God created tells us two things: a) all things created before man were created FOR man; and b) man satisfied God's heart and purpose completely, therefore God rested. (He did not rest because He was tired, but because His work in creation was finished.)

2. Man is unique. All other creatures were created according to "their kind." But, man was made in God's image and according to God's likeness. This means that man closely resembles God and even appears like God. God's image is expressed in our soul, our personality, through our mind (by our thinking), our emotions (by our feelings), and our will (by our choices).

Of all of the thousands and thousands of insects, fish, birds, and animals, only man has God's wonderful image! Man is therefore able to understand God's purpose, love God's desire and choose God's will.

3. Man is also unique because man was created with a spirit. When God breathed the breath of life into man He "formed" the human spirit within him (Gen. 2:7; Zech. 12:1). Only man has a spirit. Therefore, man's spirit is the most special part of his being. According to Zechariah 12:1 the creation of man's spirit is as great a matter as the creation of the heavens and the earth. This is because the whole purpose of the heavens and the earth is wrapped up with man's spirit. The heavens were created to contain the earth. The earth was created for man. And man was created with a spirit to contain God Himself! How marvelous!

4. What is man? Man is altogether a vessel, a container (Rom. 9:20-23; 2 Cor. 4:7). Man is a very special three-part vessel. His body was made to receive and contain food, his soul was made to receive and contain knowledge and his spirit was made to receive and contain God (John 4:24; 1 Cor. 6:17).

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Lesson Two

THE TREE OF LIFE

Burden to Impart:

Although man was created outwardly with God's image to express Him, he still needed one thing more in order to express God in full: he inwardly needed God's life. So God immediately placed man in front of the tree of life. To eat of the tree of life was man's first and man's greatest need. If he did not eat of the tree of life he would be an empty vessel (shell), with God's image, but not God's life or reality. If man did not have God Himself as his life and reality, he could never express God in full or fulfill His purpose.

Memory Verse: "And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden" (Genesis 2:9a).

Facts to Teach:

1. The Bible's first chapter shows us that God began His work with the creation of the universe and ended with the creation of man. So then, what God wants and needs is man, man with God's image and likeness, so that the invisible God may be expressed.

2. The Bible's second chapter then shows us what man needs: the tree of life. God needs man for His expression; man needs the tree of life to be his content.

3. The first thing that God did with man after creating him was to put him in the garden of Eden, which means "pleasure." Man was created with the capacity to enjoy and appreciate God's creation, so everything God made was "pleasant" and "good."

4. The "tree of life was also in the midst of the garden." In the very center of the garden was the tree of life. By thus placing man in front of the tree of life God was telling him two things: a) that God, the very one who brought man into existence, desired for man to eat of the tree of life, and b) that man needed to eat of the tree of life if he was to fulfill the purpose of his creation, to express God.

5. What is the tree of life? It is hard to say exactly what it is. We have seen a "peach" tree, with its peaches. But we have never seen a "life" tree with its fruit. However, it is easy to understand what it signifies. The tree of life would give man "life." This means that although God created man with a human life for his existence, he still needed something more: the tree of life. Man needed more than human existence in order to fulfill God's purpose, he needed LIFE; eternal life, the uncreated life of his God and Creator. This life is God Himself, and this life is Christ, for the Lord Jesus told us that He is the life (John 11:25; 14:6) and that He came to give us this life (John 10:10b). This life is altogether rich, enjoyable, and "good" for man, and enables him to fulfill God's eternal purpose.

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Lesson Three

MAN'S FALL

Burden to Impart:

Man fell because he was deceived by the cunning serpent to believe a lie rather than trust the faithful word of warning he had received from his Creator. Eventually, whom he believed he obeyed. In this way man sinned against his God and became fallen. He could no longer stand tall and unashamed before God or himself. He could no longer express God's dominion, for he had disobeyed God's word and had fallen into sin and became a failure.

Memory Verse: "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own lust; then the lust, having conceived, gives birth to sin..." (James 1:14-15a).

Facts to Teach:

1. Adam had every reason to trust in God his Creator. He created him, planted a lovely garden for him and put him in it, gave him all the fruits to "freely eat" (without toil), put all the animals under his authority and care, and made the most beautiful companion and friend he could ever have and gave her to him to be his wife. Surely God loved Adam and Eve and only wanted what was best for them.

2. In His wisdom God allowed one thing in the garden of Eden that was not good for Adam, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God faithfully warned both Adam and Eve not to eat of that tree, for if they ate of it they would die. Although they were warned, they still had their free choice. This tree was a kind of test to Adam and Eve.

3. Satan knew God loved man and had declared that man would have dominion over all the earth, so he came to destroy man. Since he could not overcome man directly (for man had dominion), he used deceit. He came to the weaker one, the woman. He began his smooth talk with an apparently innocent question. That was his bait. Once Eve swallowed the bait and entered into a conversation with that crafty serpent she was finished. He soon injected a bare lie into her thoughts, completely contradicting God's faithful warning (Gen. 3:1-5). So, Eve believed Satan's lie rather than God's word. She doubted God's love and truthfulness.

4. Eve had been outsmarted by the subtle serpent and was fully deceived (1 Tim. 2:14). She used her free will to make the wrong choice, to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She no longer believed God's word, that she would die. She believed Satan's word, that she would become like God and would be wise! Her desire then led her to disobey God's command and eat of the forbidden fruit. She then gave the fruit to Adam and though he was not deceived, he also ate. Thus, man sinned and fell from his position of dignity and dominion. He was now a sinner and became a slave of Satan.

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Four

THE RESULTS OF MAN'S FALL - SIN (1)

Burden to Impart:

Adam sinned when he disobeyed God's command to not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. However, an even more serious problem took place at the same time: *the evil, sinful nature of Satan got into man through his disobedience and was passed on to all of his descendents (Rom. 5:12)*. Now then, although man had God's image outwardly, he had Satan's sinful nature inwardly. So we find ourselves today with a conflict within us: sin rising up within us (as lust, temper, etc.) tempts us and causes us to do what we do not even want to do.

Memory Verse: "But if what I do not will, this I do, it is no longer I that do it but sin that dwells in me" (Romans 7:20).

Facts to Teach:

1. When Adam ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he not only sinned outwardly by disobeying God's command. It was even more serious than that. He had taken the forbidden fruit into his being and it became a part of him. Whatever we eat becomes us: our fibers, cells, and life. Now this forbidden fruit had become Adam's content and even his constituent.

2. What is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? What is it's fruit? As we saw with the tree of life, it represents more than a simple tree from which one may pick fruit. Whoever eats of this tree will "die." Behind this tree is just Satan, the one who had the "power of death" (Heb. 2:14). *To eat of the fruit of this tree is to take the evil, sinful nature of Satan into us.*

3. Just as the forbidden fruit came into Adam and became his inward constituent, sin also entered into him and became a part of him. Now Adam had two natures dwelling in him: his good human nature with which God created him and the sinful nature of Satan which had been injected into him when he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

4. This sinful nature was passed on through Adam to all of his descendants (Rom. 5:12a). Now Satan does not need to come to us from without to tempt us--for sin dwells within us. Knowing this helps us to understand ourselves better. Because sin dwells in us we often do the very things we determine not to do. We sometimes even do the very things we hate. Also, we find that the good things we would like to do we fail to accomplish. Why? Because we have an evil nature within us that is fighting against our own will and desire. Sin dwells within us like a "secret agent" of Satan who is working against us all the time, tempting us, overpowering us, and deceiving us (Rom. 7:15, 17, 19-20). This is the conflict of our good human nature and the sinful nature we received from Adam's fall.

[See GOSPEL OUTLINES, by Witness Lee, subjects 11, 12, and 16.]

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Lesson Five

THE RESULTS OF MAN'S FALL - SIN (2)

Burden to Impart:

Sin separates man from God and brings in judgment. Today sin causes a feeling of shame and guilt. In the future all men must be judged for all their deeds and sins. The judgment for sin will be the terrible Lake of Fire, which God has reserved for all sinners who reject God's salvation. It is a place of eternal separation from God, a place of eternal torment, a place which God prepared not for man but for the devil and his followers (Matt. 25:41).

Memory Verse: "And as it is reserved for men once to die, and after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

Facts to Teach:

1. After Adam & Eve disobeyed God and sinned against him they felt a sense of shame in their conscience; they now "knew that they were naked" (Gen. 3:7). Before this they felt no shame in God's presence nor in their own hearts (Gen. 2:25).

2. Because of the consciousness of their sins they felt shame and guilt, so they did two things to hide themselves from God: 1) they covered themselves with fig leaves, and 2) they hid themselves from God's presence (Gen. 3:7-8).

3. We know when we sin because we feel guilty in our conscience and we feel ashamed. We feel an immediate sense of separation from God. This is a warning given to us by God to tell us that we have sinned against Him.

4. Sin not only causes us to feel bad today (guilt, shame, sorrow, regret, etc.), but it also will be judged in the future. Like when we find a traffic ticket on our car window, we feel bad at that moment, and we know that we must also appear in court one day to face the judgment for what we have done wrong.

5. All men must one day stand before God's throne of judgment and give an account of their life and deeds to Him (Rom. 14:11-12). All our deeds are recorded in His books and all will be judged according to their works (Rev. 20:12-13).

6. Those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the lake of fire and will suffer the same eternal torment that the devil also chose to suffer (Rev. 20:10; 21:8). Today man feels a little pain because of his separation from God, but in that day man will feel a much greater pain, a "torment," that will endure forever.

[These lessons are intended to bring the children into a sober realization of God's judgment; God's salvation will be shared later. However, if some children are under the Spirit's conviction the way of salvation should be shared with them in a personal way.]

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Lesson Six

THE RESULTS OF MAN'S FALL - DEATH (1)

Burden to Impart:

The second result of man's fall is death, for sin issues in death. As sin was passed on to all of Adam's descendents, so was death. Man was driven out of the garden of Eden, cut off from the tree of life, and thus "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). The result of sin is not only guilt, shame and condemnation; it is death. Sin brought in death, and death has passed on to all men, for all have sinned (Rom. 5:12).

Memory Verse: "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23a).

Facts to Teach:

1. Just as a glove is made in the likeness of the hand, God created man in His own image, so that man could one day receive His life. When God placed Adam in the garden before the tree of life, Satan understood God's intention: to share His life with man.

2. Satan's plot was two-fold: 1) to cause man to sin by disobeying God and eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and 2) to keep man from eating of the tree of life, that is, to keep man from gaining the life of God.

3. Satan succeeded in his plot. Man disobeyed God, sinned, and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Instead of life, man got death. Sin came into man and with sin came death (Rom. 5:12). Sin and death are inseparable, they always go together. So death, like a slow-acting poison, got into man and began to work from that very moment. Man began to die. Day after day man was not actually living, but was gradually dying. Each "birthday" was taking him a little closer to his grave. Each day he lived in slavery to the fear of death, and soon he would be entirely subjected to the dominion on Satan, death (Heb. 2:14-15). Thus, man was "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18).

4. After man fell God removed him from the garden of Eden and out of reach of the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24), thus making it impossible for man to partake of God's life. Man was now cut off from the tree of life until Christ would come to accomplish redemption for him.

[See GOSPEL OUTLINES, by Witness Lee, subject 14]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Seven

THE RESULTS OF MAN'S FALL - DEATH (2)

Burden to Impart:

Death comes to fallen men in different stages: his spirit is dead today, so sinful man is unable to contact God. Death works in man over his entire lifetime, causing him to age, weaken, become sick and eventually die physically. Finally, all those who do not receive God's salvation will be resurrected to stand before God for His final judgment. They will be cast into the lake of fire, spirit, soul, and body. This is the second death (Rev. 20:14-15).

Memory Verse: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:17).

Facts to Teach:

1. The first mention of death in the Bible is in a warning God gave to man. Death was not part of God's plan for man, death was entirely avoidable. God warned Adam that the day he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die.

2. However, when Adam disobeyed God he did not seem to die. In order to understand what God meant when He said that Adam would die in the day he ate of the forbidden tree we need to look at some verses from other parts of the Bible.

3. According to 1 Thessalonians God created man with three parts: spirit, soul, and body. On the day that Adam sinned he in fact did die. He died in his spirit. Man's spirit enables him to have contact with God and to fellowship with God. Man still has a spirit within him, but his spirit is "dead." That is, it no longer functions as it was created to; it is no longer in contact with God.

4. Man is now "dead" in his offenses and sins (Eph. 2:1). He lives in sin and offends God, but he is unaware of God's feelings, displeasure, and wrath. As in Noah's day, the Spirit of God is striving with the sinners to bring them to repentance (Gen. 6:3) but they do not hear, they do not listen. Rather, they harden their hearts in ignorance, reject the feeling of reproof in their conscience and continue sinning against God (Eph. 4:18-19).

5. Death continues working in us through sin all our lifetime. Eventually death overcomes every man, regardless how strong or healthy, regardless how rich or good. No man can overcome death. Eventually God's word is completely fulfilled, and every man dies.

6. The first death is when our body dies. After that is judgment. Whoever is not found in the Lamb's book of life will be cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death (Rev. 20:14-15). This will be an eternal separation from God, the city and people of God (the New Jerusalem), the tree of life, and the water of life! This is to be cut off from every blessing of God and every positive thing that exists in the universe!

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Eight

GOD'S SALVATION - CHRIST'S REDEEMING DEATH ON THE CROSS (1)

Burden to Impart:

In order for God to recover man after he had fallen, the first thing He needed to do was to redeem man back to Himself. God would not give up man; instead, He would pay whatever price was necessary to repossess His lost treasure. So Christ, the Lamb of God, died upon the cross to redeem us by His own precious blood and pay the great debt our sins had incurred (1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Memory Verse: "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold,...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

Facts to Teach:

1. The result of man's fall was very damaging to him. Man had taken in the evil nature of Satan into his being and had become constituted a sinner. Also, man's spirit had died and his destiny had changed from the possibility of receiving God's eternal life to suffer the lake of fire eternally with God's enemy, the devil.

2. It seemed that God's eternal purpose with man was over. Man's situation was utterly hopeless and helpless. But, God had a way! Before man sinned or had even been created, God, in His infinite wisdom and foresight, had prepared a way for man's restoration and recovery. God had planned and prepared redemption for man before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8).

3. When Adam disobeyed God in the garden he broke God's commandment and transgressed against God's righteousness. He also acquired a sinful nature and fell short of expressing God's glory (Rom. 3:23). In fact, man now expressed God's enemy, Satan. Man was lost! Man was corrupted! Man was destroyed! In order for God to still have anything to do with man in a positive way something had to be done. Man had to be rescued! Man had to be recovered back to God. All of man's sins, rebellions, and problems with God could not just be ignored by God. They had to be solved in an absolutely proper way. If man was to ever be restored to his God and God's eternal purpose he must be redeemed.

4. Redeem means to buy back something that was originally yours. Although it was originally yours it was somehow lost. Now, in order for you to rightfully repossess it you must pay a price for it.

5. We have been redeemed from our sinful and vain manner of life by the Lord's death on the cross and the shedding of His precious blood (1 Pet. 1:18-19; 2:24). He paid the very highest price that could have been paid, His own blood (Acts 20:28), to redeem us back to Himself. Therefore, we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19b-20a).

6. Before God could do anything else, He had to redeem us back to Himself. Thus, He has the legal right to save us to the uttermost.

[See Lesson 11 of God's Full Salvation lessons; Living Stream Ministry]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Nine

GOD'S SALVATION - CHRIST'S REDEEMING DEATH ON THE CROSS (2)

Burden to Impart:

Because we have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, God has the full right to forgive our offenses and cleanse us from the sins we committed against Him. Forgiveness clears our record before God and cleansing removes the stain of defilement that sin caused on our conscience and character. Thus, through the Lord's blood we are both forgiven and cleansed. It is as though we never sinned!

Memory Verse: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace" (Ephesians 1:7).

Facts to Teach:

1. Because man had fallen away from God and was lost he needed to be redeemed and brought back to God. The Lord's death on the cross firstly accomplished redemption, that is, the great price of His own precious blood was paid to purchase us back to God.

2. Once we believe in the Lord Jesus, in His death on the cross for our sins and in His resurrection, we are redeemed (Rom. 10:9). Thus, rightfully becoming God's possession once again He may freely and richly apply His redemption to us, forgiving and cleansing us from all of our sins.

3. Whenever a person sins there is a two-fold result: 1) he offends God and a record of this offence is written in God's book (Rev. 20:12), and 2) he is defiled in his own conscience (Heb. 10:22; 9:14). Thus, sin causes an offense, and this becomes a blemish upon our character.

4. Christ's redeeming death solves both of problems which issue from sin. When the redemption He accomplished on the cross is applied to us we receive both forgiveness of sin and cleansing of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

5. Because the Lord Jesus shed His blood for our sins, God is righteous to forgive us our sins when we confess them to Him. When God forgives our sins, He forgets our sins (Heb. 8:12). Whatever was written in His book is blotted out and is remembered no more!

6. When we receive the Lord Jesus, not only are our sins forgiven and forgotten by God, but we ourselves are cleansed from all unrighteousness. The stain of defilement upon our conscience is cleansed by the Lord's blood and is entirely removed. As Isaiah said, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18). Thus, before God we are forgiven, and in our own conscience and character we are washed and cleansed.

[See God's Full Salvation] lesson book, Lesson 12; Living Stream Ministry]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Ten

GOD'S SALVATION - CHRIST'S REDEEMING DEATH ON THE CROSS (3)

Burden to Impart:

Christ's redeeming death on the cross restored man back to God, provided the means for man's sins to be forgiven and washed away, and made it possible for all who believe in Christ to be justified before God. We need no longer feel guilty, ashamed, and condemned. Because of Christ's death and His precious blood we have been redeemed, forgiven, washed, approved, accepted, and justified! Hallelujah!

Memory Verse: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

Facts to Teach:

1. Sin brought in many problems to man, causing man to fall away from God and His eternal purpose, creating an offense toward God and defiling man's conscience and character. Also, sin brought man into condemnation, that is, man was guilty before God and could not be approved or accepted by God. Sinful man was no longer worthy of God or His presence. As a condemned sinner he was awaiting God's disapproval, rejection, condemnation, and judgment (Rom. 3:19).

2. All of these problems are solved by the great redemption that Christ accomplished on the cross when He shed His precious blood for us. By shedding His blood we were redeemed back to God and became His rightful possession once again, our many sins were all forgiven by God and forgotten forever (Heb. 8:12), and the stain of defilement in our conscience was cleansed away (Heb. 9:14; 10:22). We became as "white as snow" in God's sight (Isa. 1:18).

3. We now needed the reassuring approval of God. We needed a clear declaration that we were acceptable in His sight. This clearance and approval is expressed through God's "justification." God did not just secretly forgive our sins; He openly and clearly accepted us, approved us and justified us. This was His way to declare to all the universe that we had no problem with Him and He had no problem with us!

4. An example of God's justification of us is seen in the case of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. The sinful prodigal returned to his father wearing filthy rags. In no way could he be received at his father's table or be acceptable in his sight. So, the first thing his father did was to cover him with "the best robe" (v. 22). Thus, he was received, accepted, approved and "justified." In like manner, we are accepted, approved, and justified by God when we believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Savior.

5. We are justified only by our faith in Christ, not by our works. When we have been thus justified we enjoy peace with God.

[See God's Full Salvation; Lesson 13; Living Stream Ministry.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Eleven

GOD'S SALVATION - CHRIST'S LIFE GIVING RESURRECTION (1)

Burden to Impart:

Through sin, man's fall brought him under the power of Satan, who eventually brought him fully into the bondage and corruption of death. The Lord Jesus boldly entered into death and conquered the one who had the power of death, the Devil. Now, the Lord Jesus has the keys of death and of Hades (Rev. 1:18). *Christ is Victor! Now, because He has both defeated Satan and has overcome death, He is also able to save all who are His from the power of death. The fact of the Lord's resurrection is the most vital truth in the gospel.*

Memory Verse: "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death, since it was not possible for Him to be held by it" (Acts 2:24).

Facts to Teach:

1. Christ's death on the cross solves all of our problems concerning sin. He came as the spotless Lamb of God and shed His precious blood to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), to redeem us back to God (1 Pet. 1:18-19), and to justify us before Him (Rom. 3:24-25).

2. However, an even more serious problem than sin must also be solved, which is the issue of sin: death. As the death of the Lord Jesus upon the cross and the shedding of His redeeming blood saves us from sin and judgment, so also His life-giving resurrection saves us from death and corruption.

3. Through sin death came into the world and "reigned" over all men (Rom. 5:12, 14). All men are eventually subdued under its power and forcibly brought into its domain, Hades. The Bible reveals to us that death is not simply an event that occurs because people get old. Death is Satan's greatest weapon. Death is Satan's greatest power. There is a person behind death, Satan, the Devil.

4. The Lord Jesus did not fear death for He is the "resurrection and the life" (John 11:25). He willingly laid down His life for us (John 10:18) and entered into death. He challenged and defied the power of death. After spending three days in Hades and fulfilling the Scriptures, the time had come for the Lord to take up His life again. His soul and spirit arose victoriously out of Hades, His body was quickened and He arose out of the grave (Acts 2:27, 24). It was impossible for death to hold Him! His resurrection conquered death!

5. Not only had Satan, death, and Hades been conquered through the Lord's resurrection, but all those who had been held in slavery by them were released (Heb. 2:15). The Lord's resurrection "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light" (2 Tim. 1:10) for all those who believe on Him through the gospel.

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twelve

GOD'S SALVATION: CHRIST'S LIFE GIVING RESURRECTION (2)

Burden to Impart:

God solved our problem of death by the resurrection of Christ from among the dead. Christ not only conquered death through His resurrection; he also became a life-giving Spirit. Although as a man the Lord Jesus contained God's life He still had not reached the goal. He came that we "might have life" (John 10:10b). Through resurrection the Lord became a "life giving Spirit" (1 Cor. 15:45b). As a Spirit He is now able to give life to us.

Memory Verse: "... The first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45).

Facts to Teach:

1. Man's dual problem of sin and death are solved by Christ's death and resurrection. His death solved the problem of our sin and His resurrection solved the problem of death.

2. Resurrection is not only a historical fact that the Lord Jesus experienced personally. It was also the process through which the Lord was changed in form so that He could save us from death and give us life, that is, the eternal life of God.

3. In order that the Lord Jesus might be able to give us life He had to pass through both death and resurrection. As with the blossoming flowers, there are two stages. First the seed is planted in the ground. Then the outward shell of the seed decays, cracks, and "dies." It is then that the inward content of the seed is able to be released from within it (John 12:24). The life of the seed begins to germinate and grow. Eventually the seed's shell is no longer seen; only the life of the seed is seen.

4. Before the Lord's death and resurrection God's divine and eternal life was concealed within the Lord Jesus, just like the life of a seed is hidden within the seed before it is planted. When He rose from the dead He changed His form. He "became a life-giving Spirit." The eternal life was no longer concealed, it was manifested. It was no longer restricted, it was released. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and the Spirit gives life (2 Cor. 3:6, 17).

5. As the Spirit the Lord Jesus has no limitations. He is not bound or limited to time or space. He is able to give life freely and unlimitedly, in every place and to any person. Through death and resurrection He became a "life-giving Spirit."

6. His resurrection is not then just an objective fact of history. It is the means by which our Lord Jesus changed His form from flesh to spirit so that He could give us life. Though we were "dead in our offenses and sins" God "made us alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:1, 5). Once we were dead toward God. Now we are alive toward God with Christ as our life. Thus, through His resurrection not only He lives, we also live (John 14:19)!

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Thirteen

HOW TO BE SAVED - FROM SIN (1)

Burden to Impart:

The next two lessons deal with salvation from sin. The first requirement for salvation from sin is a genuine repentance (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38). When the Holy Spirit convicts us of our sinful condition (John 16:8-9), and we recognize our real situation before God and repent we experience the forgiveness of our sins and the covering of our nakedness with Christ, as the "best robe" covered the repentant prodigal in Luke 15.

Memory Verse: "And that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations..." (Luke 24:47).

Facts to Teach:

1. To repent is to "have a change of mind issuing in regret, to have a turn in purpose" (Matt. 3:2, note 1 in the Recovery Version of the New Testament). When someone has heard the truth of the Gospel and has been enlightened by God he is able to repent. Once his eyes have been "opened" he is able to "turn from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God" and "receive forgiveness from sins" (Acts 26:18).

2. By nature we are blind (not seeing or understanding things as God sees them) and hardened in heart (not truly concerned about God or God's righteousness). It usually takes some kind of self-disappointment or failure for our proud and hardened hearts to repent and turn back to God. The earlier in life that this happens, the better. The smaller the sin or failure that God is able to use to pierce our conscience, the better. Due to an extremely hardened heart some people must almost reach the point of destruction before they will finally surrender and turn back to God.

3. The classical example of repentance is that of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-24. After the younger son foolishly and selfishly squandered his dear father's inheritance, he was eventually reduced to poverty, hunger and shame, coveting even the pig's food which his father fed his pigs. Finally, however, he "came to himself" (v. 17). This was not only because of his circumstances, but because of the Spirit's searching and enlightening. His words, "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you," indicated that he had recognized his sin both before God and man (his father), and had made a turn in his heart and mind. That is, he had repented.

4. When the repented prodigal returned to his father he was not reproached or punished. He was graciously forgiven and generously cared for. This shows us that the way to be saved from sin is to repent and return to our loving God and Father who is waiting to receive us back to Himself. As the prodigal's dirty rags and unclean condition was covered up by the "best robe," we also are saved and covered with Christ as our righteousness when we repent and come back to God (1 Cor. 1:30).

[See Gospel Outlines, Subject 91, by W. Lee; also Hymn #1052.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Fourteen

HOW TO BE SAVED - FROM SIN (2)

Burden to Impart:

In the previous lesson we saw that the first requirement for salvation is a genuine repentance, a change in our thinking. *The second requirement to be saved from sin is faith in the Lord Jesus.* That is, to believe that He is the Savior, the One who came to die upon the cross for us and for our sins.

Memory Verse: "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18).

Facts to Teach:

1. The Bible teaches us that because "all have sinned" (Rom. 3:23a) all are also under God's condemnation and wrath (John 3:18, 36).

2. Sin is like a disease we are all born with. Sooner or later it will be manifested that we are all sinners. For example, although a child's parents do not teach their child to lie, yet somehow, every child learns. This is because their sinful nature teaches them. Although we do not approve of stealing, fighting, using bad language, hurting others, etc., yet, if we are truthful, we must admit that we are all guilty of such sins.

3. However, "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). He did not require us to improve ourselves or fix up our mistakes so that we could be saved. Although we were "weak" (in doing God's will) and "ungodly" (in expressing God), God loved us just as we were, sinners, and sent His Son to die upon the cross for us (Rom. 5:6-9).

4. To be saved from our sin we need only believe in the Savior, the Lord Jesus. God sent Him into the condemned and perishing world to save all who would believe in Him. We do not need to commit some great sin to perish, we need only to ignore and thus reject God's salvation and we will perish. Like a drowning man in the middle of the sea, if he refuses to lay hold of a life preserver he will perish. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:3a).

[See Gospel Outlines, Subject 109; by W. Lee; also Hymn #1048.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Fifteen

HOW TO BE SAVED - FROM DEATH (1)

Burden to Impart:

We may be saved from death both now and in the future, both spiritually and physically, by believing in the resurrected Christ, calling upon His name and confessing Him to be our Lord (Rom. 10:8-14). The One who died for our sins was also raised from the dead! Therefore, He is living and is able to be our Savior!

Memory Verse: "That if you confess with your mouth, Lord Jesus, believe in your heart that God has raised Him from among the dead, you shall be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Facts to Teach:

1. Death entered into the world through sin and was passed on to all men, for all have sinned (Rom. 5:12). "Death" does not only refer to a future threat of the termination of our life and happiness, it also refers to our present condition before God. In the sight of God all men are "dead in offenses and sins" and are "estranged from the life of God" (Eph. 2:1; 4:18).

2. Physically, death operates in us from the moment of our birth. Death causes us to grow old, become weak, sick, and die.

3. Spiritually, death causes us to feel empty, unfulfilled, and unsatisfied in the deepest part of our being. This is because we lack God's reality in our spirit.

4. The New Testament teaches us that salvation is the result of our faith in Christ, particularly, in the resurrection of Christ from among the dead. To merely believe that the Lord Jesus came to earth and died upon the cross will not save us. Most historians believe this fact, yet they are not saved. We must "believe in our heart [not only in our head!] that God has raised Him from among the dead" in order for us to be justified by God and approved by Him (Rom. 10:9-10). Believing in His resurrection means that we realize that Jesus was not only a good man who one day died on a cross. He is the "Lord," that is, the Creator, owner, and master of each one of us; yet, He came to die for us. Because He was not a sinner, God accepted His death as our substitute and therefore raised Him up from the dead (Rom. 4:25). To believe in His resurrection includes all of this.

5. Once we believe in the Lord Jesus and His resurrection we will spontaneously desire Him to be our Savior and will call upon His precious Name in order to be saved (Rom. 10:13-14). The resurrected Christ is near to every one of us (Rom. 10:8). We only need to open up our heart to believe in Him and open up our mouth to call upon Him and we will be saved! By believing in Him we are justified and approved before God. By calling upon Him and confessing Him to be our Lord we are saved and separated before man.

[See Gospel Outlines, subject 157, by W. Lee; also Hymns #123.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Sixteen

HOW TO BE SAVED - FROM DEATH (2)

Burden to Impart:

The only way one can be saved from death is by being born again (John 3:1-16). By our first birth our corrupted, dying flesh was brought forth. Whether we are bad in our behavior or good (like Nicodemus), we are flesh. *We can only be saved from death and corruption by being born again; that is, by believing in the Lord Jesus and being born of God's Spirit in our human spirit.*

Memory Verse: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said unto you, You must be born anew" (John 3:6-7).

Facts to Teach:

1. In John 3 we see the clear teaching of the Lord's salvation from death by being born anew. An elderly gentleman, Nicodemus, came to the Lord Jesus to learn how to live a better life in order to please God. Nicodemus was not the average Jew. He was a "ruler of the Jews." He was an outstanding citizen and a leader of God's people. Also, he was of the strictest sect of the Jewish religion, a Pharisee. Also, he was mature in age, humble in disposition (for he came to Jesus, a man probably half his own age), and seeking in heart (he came at night to Jesus because he feared persecution).

2. Such a good man came to Jesus! What more did he need? He seemed to have everything. One thing he lacked: God's eternal life. Though he was so good and respectable he only had the human life which he received from his human birth. Although he had a good human life, it was nevertheless not a perfect human life. Even the more, it was a dying human life. In a few short years Nicodemus' good human life would come to an end and like all others would be overcome by death.

3. The Lord Jesus surprised Nicodemus by telling him that he needed only one thing: to be born again, to be born anew. His need was not just a little improvement of his behavior, his need was to have a completely new beginning, a new origin, a new birth.

4. We all, like Nicodemus, need to realize that our human life is not perfect. In fact, it is "flesh." That means that it is actually full of corruption and death. We can be saved from the death of our fleshly, natural life only by being born again.

5. We may be born again by recognizing that we all, like Nicodemus and the children of Israel, have been bitten by Satan and are dying (John 3:14; cf. Num. 21:4-9). Our only salvation is to look in faith upon the dear Lord Jesus, God's only begotten Son, who came into the world to die for our sins upon the cross (John 3:16). By believing in Him His Spirit enters into our spirit and we are born again, thus receiving His eternal life (John 3:6, 16).

[See Gospel Outlines, by W. Lee, Subject 100; also Hymn 1019.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Seventeen

THE NEED TO BE BAPTIZED (1): To be Saved from this Crooked Generation

Burden to Impart:

God has ordained baptism as the way to be saved from the sinful, Christ-rejecting world, which He has already condemned. By our baptism we declare that we have repented from our sins and no longer belong to the world. By baptism we are also testifying that we have believed in the Savior and belong to Him.

Memory Verse: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Facts to Teach:

1. God's salvation is not only an inward matter, saving us from our sins (by the redemption and blood of Christ) and death (by the resurrection and Spirit of Christ), it is also a matter which affects our relationship with the world around us.

2. God requires us to be saved from sin, death, and the world. The "world" refers to the degraded and corrupted society around us and in which we live. The "world" is mankind as the God-rejecting, Christ-rejecting society which refuses to accept God's Word and testimony. Rather, it hates righteousness and delights in sin (Rom. 1:32); it hates truth and light and loves darkness and falsehood (John 3:19-20). The world's greatest sin is not just that it did not believe in the Lord Jesus and rejected Him (John 3:18), but it also crucified Him.

3. When the Apostle Peter preached the first gospel message on the day of Pentecost he told the people that they not only needed forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), they needed to, "Be saved from this crooked generation" (the world) that was around them. The Apostle Paul called the world a "crooked and perverted generation" (Phil. 2:15). The world has rejected and crucified God's only begotten Son! The world has rejected its Savior! For this reason God's judgment is upon the world. We should not remain in the world! We need to be saved from the world. God's way of salvation from the world is baptism.

4. To be saved from our sins we must repent and believe in the Lord Jesus. To be saved from death we need to receive and experience Christ as the Spirit. To be saved and delivered from the world, the crooked generation, we must be baptized. Baptism is not a secret decision made only before God. Baptism is a public testimony to those around us (family, friends, the church, etc.) that we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and have received Him as our Savior. Thus, baptism testifies that 1) we have repented from our sins and worldly way of life and 2) it testifies that we have received Christ as our Savior. In this way we are saved (before God) from our sins by faith, and we are saved (before men) from the world by baptism.

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Eighteen

THE NEED TO BE BAPTIZED (2): To be Delivered out of Satan's Kingdom and Transferred into God's Kingdom

Burden to Impart:

Baptism is not only a public testimony that we give before men of our repentance and faith in Christ, it is God's way to deliver us from His enemy, Satan, and Satan's evil kingdom of darkness. Baptism is the means by which we are transferred out of Satan's authority of darkness into the kingdom of God (John 3:5; Col. 1:15).

Memory Verse: "Who delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13).

Facts to Teach:

1. We need to be saved from the world not only because it is crooked and perverted (Phil. 2:15; Acts 2:40), but because it is the kingdom of God's wicked enemy, Satan. Satan is the one who is behind the world operating everything and everyone who is not saved (Eph. 2:2). The world system is Satan's masterpiece, designed to keep men from God.

2. Because Satan is the one behind the world who rules it he is called the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31). Because Satan is the one who receives the glory and worship from the world he is called the "god of this age [world]" (2 Cor. 4:4).

3. This is the reason that although God loves all the individual persons in the world and desires to save them, He has judged and condemned both the world as well as the ruler of the world (John 12:31).

4. By baptism we are "delivered...out of the authority of darkness [Satan's world] and transferred...into the kingdom of the Son of His love [God's kingdom] (Col. 1:13).

5. The Lord Jesus told Nicodemus that we must be "born of water and the Spirit" in order to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). We are born of water and the Spirit by believing and being baptized (Mark 16:16). Thus, God's way to deliver us from the judged, Satan-ruled world is baptism. Baptism is also the means by which God transfers us into His kingdom, the kingdom of the Son of His love.

[If time allows, point 6 may also be shared as an illustration.]

6. An Old Testament type of this aspect of baptism is the crossing of the Red Sea by the children of Israel (1 Cor. 10:2). By crossing the Red Sea they were saved and separated from the slavery of Egypt as well as from their enemy, the pursuing armies of Egypt.

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Nineteen

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD (1) - BY CALLING ON THE LORD'S NAME

Burden to Impart:

The Lord is near to us and we may freely partake of His salvation by calling upon His precious Name. Calling upon Him is the simple way to "take of the river of the water of life" which God's Word has told us is given "freely" to all who desire to drink (Rev. 22:17). Also, by calling upon the Lord in a real way we sense that He is very near to us and lets us experience His riches in an abundant way (Psa. 145:18; Rom. 10:12).

Memory Verse: "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth" (Psalm 145:18).

Facts to Teach:

1. Once we have received the Lord Jesus as our Savior and have been baptized we are saved. We are saved before God eternally as well as before men publicly.

2. We were saved by realizing our need of Christ (our lost condition, our sins, our guilt, our emptiness, etc.) and asking Him to save us. Having realized our need we simply called upon the Lord Jesus and freely received Him and His salvation.

3. Although we all felt led to believe in the Lord and receive Him for different reasons, the Bible reveals that we were actually all very much alike. We were all *thirsty*. God's salvation to us is like the cleansing, filling, satisfying river of water of life (Rev. 22:17). In the last chapter of the Bible we are invited to "come, take the water of life freely."

4. The Lord's salvation is near to us and is ever available to us. Otherwise, how could we take of it "freely?" Although our salvation is eternally secure, we still need a day by day, even moment by moment, supply of the Lord's life in order to enjoy this wonderful salvation that we have received. Our daily experience shows us that as Christians we need to continuously "take of the water of life."

5. The way we take the water of life is by simply calling upon the Lord Jesus. When we prayed and called upon His name the first time, He saved us. However, we often tend to drift away from the Lord. We get occupied with other things. Some things may be good, some may be bad. But, the result is the same, we find ourselves distracted from the Lord and we sense a "dryness" within us. We do not need to struggle desperately in order to recover the satisfaction of the Lord's presence within us. We simply need to turn to Him within our heart and spirit by calling upon His name. We will find that He is near to us whenever we call upon Him in a real way (Psa. 145:118).

6. Although it is not necessary to shout when we call upon the Lord's name, it is helpful to call upon Him audibly. By practicing this we are saved, enlivened, strengthened, uplifted, and enriched.

[See L.S. of Genesis #25, and Calling on the Name of the Lord.]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twenty

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD (2) - PRAYER UNTO FELLOWSHIP

Burden to Impart:

As Christians we have the privilege of having fellowship with God through prayer. Such prayer should be without pretension or hiding. It should be completely open and sincere, uttered from an honest heart and a genuine spirit. Calling upon the Lord ushers us into fellowship with the Lord; prayer continues and deepens that fellowship with Him. We should practice prayer daily until we develop a habit of having fellowship with the Lord regularly.

Memory Verse: "... the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness; for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting...." (Romans 8:26a).

Facts to Teach:

1. Prayer is to the Christian as vital as breathing. Prayer is the most basic means of receiving God's life. Just as we receive oxygen through breathing, we receive God's Spirit of life into our spirit when we pray. As our human life is constantly maintained and renewed breath by breath, so also prayer maintains our Christian life in a healthy and living condition.

2. As we saw in the last lesson, calling upon the Lord's name is the most simple prayer we can utter to the Lord. We can call upon His name before we pray, as we pray, and even after we pray. However, sometimes we feel the need for something more than a short contact with the Lord. We may feel the desire to continue our contact with the Lord by fellowshiping with Him through prayer.

4. When we begin to pray to the Lord we may find that we do not know what to say to Him. That is O.K. The Bible says that though we don't know how to pray as we should that His Spirit joins in with us as we pray and helps us (Rom. 8:26).

5. When we pray and talk to God He does not require us to say everything right and perfect. He is actually listening to our "heart" (Rom. 8:27) more than our words. So then, we can speak freely and openly to the Lord. We can talk to Him with the confidence that He hears and understands our heart's prayer.

6. Best of all, through the fellowship of prayer, we get to know God. Moses was a man of prayer to whom the Lord spoke "face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Exo. 34:11).

7. In order to pray, worship, or fellowship with God we must use our spirit. To pray with our spirit we speak to God the most real and genuine thing that is within us. We should not pretend. We should not fake it. We should learn to be sincere and honest to God. We should learn to be completely open to Him, truly praying from our heart and our spirit. Although He already knows what is in our heart, we do not experience fellowship with Him until we express what is in our heart to Him. [See Hymns, #784]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twenty-One

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD (2) - BY PRAYER WITH PETITIONS

Burden to Impart:

As God's dear children we have the privilege to pray in fellowship with Him and have our petitions heard and answered. We should practice praying firstly concerning God's interests, then concerning other's spiritual and practical needs, and finally concerning our own needs. God is our faithful and loving Father; He will hear us and we will rejoice as we see Him answer our prayers.

Memory Verse: "And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).

Facts to Teach:

1. We saw in the previous lesson that through prayer we may fellowship with God and that such fellowship should be from a completely open, unpretending, sincere heart and spirit.
2. Sometimes as we pray we realize that our conscience is bothering us, that we feel bad or wrong in our heart because of some sin we have done or some failure. Before we can continue on in our prayer of fellowship we need to openly and honestly confess our sin or shortcoming to the Lord. As we confess our sin He forgives us and cleanses us with His precious blood. Once is enough. If we confess our sins to Him we can trust His promise that He will cleanse us. We can then continue on peacefully in our prayers.
3. A second great privilege in prayer is to bring our requests and specific petitions to God. That is, we may ask of Him (Matt. 7:8). If we ask anything of Him according to His will, He hears us (1 John 5:15). God is especially pleased when we pray for His interests, Name, kingdom, church, people, etc. (Matt. 6:9-10). He also desires us to pray for other's salvation, progress in the Christian life (1 Tim. 2:1-4), and welfare. These are very pure, unselfish prayers, which are God's delight and will.
5. Secondly, the Lord taught us to ask Him concerning our own "daily bread" and material needs (Matt. 6:11; 7:7-11). Since we are His children in life for His kingdom and glory, we have every right to make our needs known to Him, and as a loving Father He delights in taking care of all of our needs.
6. Thirdly, we may bring all our anxieties and cares to the Lord, for He cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7; Phil. 4:6-7). He will hear us and take up our burdens. In exchange, He gives us His peace, comfort and reassurance. What a trade! His peace will guard our mind and thoughts from the devil's doubts, fears, anxieties, etc.
7. Lastly, when we pray with petitions we should not ask selfishly, just concerning our own pleasures, profit, etc. (James 4:3). Such prayers do not please God, nor will He answer them.

[See Hymns, #789]

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twenty-Two

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD (3) - READING THE BIBLE (1)

Burden to Impart:

Having been born again, our inner man needs to grow and mature. This growth takes place as we feed upon God's Word. We will grow into God's salvation by nourishing ourselves spiritually with God's Word as we read the Bible each day (1 Pet. 2:2). We should not ignore our spirit's longing by substituting other, perhaps more "exciting," things for God's Word. Rather, we should be clear that our first and foremost need each day is to feed upon God's Word.

Memory Verse: "As newborn babes, long for the guileless [pure] milk of the word, that by it you may grow unto salvation, if you have tasted that the Lord is good..."
(1 Peter 2:2).

Facts to Teach:

1. The two great treasures that the Lord has given to His children are His Holy Spirit and His holy Word. Once we have believed in the Lord Jesus and have been baptized we are born again and indwelt by His Holy Spirit (John 1:12; 3:5; 7:39).

2. By being born again a new life is conceived in our spirit; this is the beginning of our "inner man" (Eph. 3:16). Although Christ does dwell in our spirit when we are young Christians, He still needs to grow and be formed in us (Gal. 4:19) so that we can become mature. He grows through the nourishment of the Word of God. The most important factor in our growth is the food we eat. Some tribes of people are very short (like the pigmies) and some are very tall. This is related to their diet. We are what we eat.

3. As "newborn babes" in Christ, we should "long for the guileless [pure] milk of the Word" of God (1 Pet. 2:2). Every babe cries out for milk. No one taught it to do so, its nature and stomach teaches it. We also, as God's children, have a longing desire in our spirit to feed upon His Word so that we may grow. Our inner man does not want to remain as a babe forever, it longs to mature and grow fully into God's salvation.

4. It is easy to ignore the yearning cry of the babe in our spirit. After a while we may not even realize that our inner man is hungry. We often distract ourselves with other things that seem more important or exciting than feeding our inner man, like reading, watching T.V., playing, etc. Although we may consciously forget the need of our inner man, still he is unsatisfied, yearning for some spiritual nourishment from God's Word.

5. If we will set aside some time each day for reading God's Word in the Bible we will develop a taste for it. Through the reading of God's Word we sense that we can actually "taste" the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2; Psalms. 34:8). We will eventually proclaim as King David did in the Psalms, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth" (Psa. 119:103). We will come to value God's Word to be more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold (Psa. 19:10).

THE TRUTH AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD'S SALVATION

Lesson Twenty-Three

HOW TO CONTACT THE LORD (3) - READING THE BIBLE (2)

Burden to Impart:

Growth in our spiritual life requires the nourishment of God's Word. As we feed on His Word through our reading of the Bible in a regular way we will find that we are growing, both in our spiritual life and in our understanding of God's Word. We do not need a "good feeling" to assure us of our growth and profit as we read the Word. We simply need to feed and read in a steady way. We will grow.

Memory Verse: "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart..." (Jeremiah 15:16)

Facts to Teach:

1. A good example of one who grew up strongly in God's Word is Timothy. From a "babe" he grew up with God's Word. This was mainly because his mother and grandmother fed him with the word and taught it to him (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).

2. When he was older the apostle Paul, his spiritual father, told him to continue on in God's Word by reading it and diligently studying it (1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15) on his own.

3. A few practical points will help in the reading of God's Word:

a) Try to obtain your own Bible (not just the New Testament).

b) In order to make it easier to develop the habit of reading the Bible consider when would be the best time of the day for you to regularly read the Bible; i.e., make a plan.

c) Start by reading the New Testament, beginning with Matthew. Do not jump around to different places. Use a book marker and continue on each day where you left off the day before. It helps to have a goal when you read (don't make your goal too hard!) perhaps one chapter each day. If you do not reach your goal one day, the next day simply continue on where you left off. Try your best to keep to your scheduled time! Soon it will not be so hard; it will be a good habit.

d) As you read the Bible, have a pencil handy. When you find a verse that is especially meaningful to you, underline it.

e) When you find a verse or two that especially draws your attention, pause and chew on them by pray-reading. By pray-reading we are brought deeper into the Word by mingling our reading with prayer. Since the Word of God is spirit and life (John 6:63) we need to use our spirit as we read His word in order to get the benefit of spiritual nourishment and understanding. As we pray-read we can call upon the Lord's name, say a prayer with the very words we are reading, and say "Amen!" to His Word. We should not expect "good feeling" to assure us that we are being nourished.